"th se enduring matinee id ls"

A CHRONOLOGICAL LOOK
AT SOUND SERIALS
(1929 - 1956)

●

CHAPTER 28
VOLUME 3 — NUMBER 8

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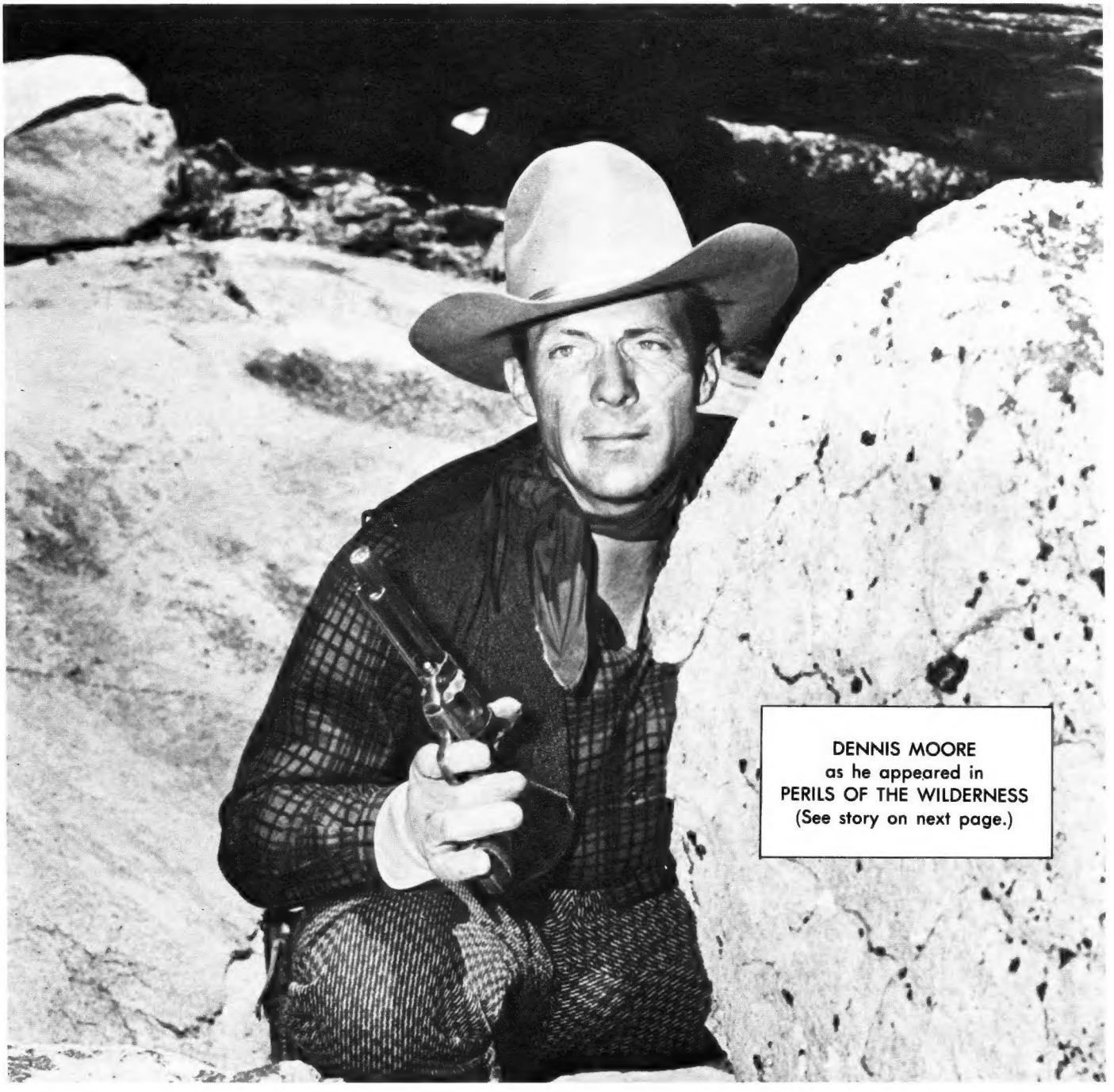


DENNIS MOORE
as he appeared in
PERILS OF THE WILDERNESS
(See story on next page.)

MASTHEAD: Forrest Taylor (top) and Ed Cassidy.
See synopsis inside concerning DEADWOOD DICK.

A TRIBUTE TO

DENNIS MOORE

by BILL "SMOKY" SEXTON
with the Assistance of Bob Malcomson

•

Photos / Jim Stringham, Les Adams and Bob Malcomson

Dennis Moore was born Dennis Meadows in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 26, 1908. That much is fact, even though some "historians" place the year as late as 1914.

When he first entered pictures, he used the name Denny Meadows and changed it during 1936 when, or just before, he was placed under contract to Warner Bros. and made at least four features.

His earliest movie on record is, interestingly, a serial — playing a ranch hand in THE RED RIDER (1934). He was unbilled, but the photo on page 390 of TEMI, as well as the one here, substantiate his appearance. Altogether he made ***seven*** serials, appearing in the lead or a major supporting role in six later in his career.

Buck Jones, Marion Shilling and Denny Meadows (Dennis Moore) in THE RED RIDER —Universal Pictures.

Moore's "studio" biography says he was a physical director with the Dallas Athletic Club and appeared on stage for a number of years, including a role with Ken Murray in "Louder Please" that brought him to the attention of Hollywood.

In 1935, still using the name Denny Meadows he was in "The Dawn Rider" (Monogram release) supporting John Wayne; and, "The Sagebrush Troubadour" (Republic) with Gene Autry.

Early in 1936, he was billed seventh in the supporting cast of "Hair-Trigger Casey" starring Jack Perrin — and also appeared in Perrin's "Desert Justice" (distributed by Atlantic Pictures). Mid-year, he was in "Meet Nero Wolfe" and "The Lonely Trail" (Wayne, again) as Dennis Moore.

In the last quarter of 1936, he had four Warner Bros. releases: "Here Comes Carter", "Down the Stretch", "China Clipper" and "Sing Me a Love Song".

[Editor's Note: In the 1938 "Film Daily Yearbook" his film appearances were illogically grouped with Dennie Moore, a female supporting actress who was principally a comedian! The same fate befell Charles King, the villain, and Charles King, the singer-star of "Broadway Melody" (1929). From the record, it would appear Moore had a six-month contract with Warner Bros. and his option was not renewed.]

In "China Clipper" Moore had a long ***showy*** part (and little dialogue) as Humphrey Bogart's co-pilot when the plane transcended the Pacific Ocean from California to the Orient.

Another of Dennis Moore's better parts was in Monogram Pictures' "Mutiny in the Big House" (1939) as a one-time loser befriended by prison chaplain Charles Bickford. Barton MacLane played the "heavy". Later he appeared to good advantage in a color short, "The Man from Tascosa".

In the 40's, Moore started his climb toward bigger roles working at Producers Releasing Corporation (P.R.C.) as featured actor opposite George Houston in "The Lone Rider" series. When Bob Livingston took over the "Rider" role in "Overland Stagecoach", Dennis changed his name to Smoky Moore and remained on.

He returned to Monogram to replace John "Dusty" King in "The Range Buster" series with Ray "Crash" Corrigan and Max Terhune. He was in four productions released in 1943 before the group was permanently disbanded, the last being "Bullets and Saddles". His next series was as "second banana" to Jimmy Wakely, the singing cowboy.

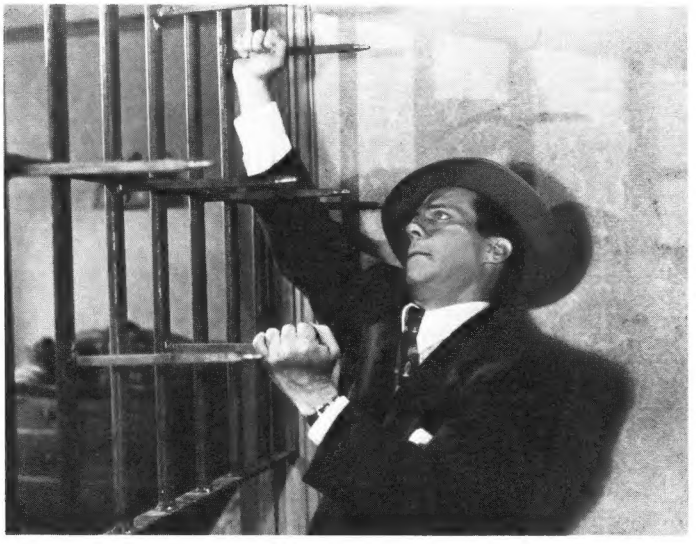
(L. to R.) Joe Sawyer, Moore, Lionel Atwill and Virginia Christine in RAIDERS OF GHOST CITY.

Dennis Moore received top billing (tho below the title) in Universal's serial RAIDERS OF GHOST CITY (1944). He was Captain Steve Clark, a Union Secret Service Agent. His sidekick was Idaho Jones, played by Joe Sawyer. Action took place in 1865, and, for the period, the plot was unusual since it dealt with Prussia (Germany) attempting to seize U.S. gold needed to buy Alaska from Russia.

Moore stayed on at Universal and did battle as a Nazi agent in THE MASTER KEY. The stars were Milburn Stone (later Doc Adams of "Gunsmoke" fame) and Jan Wiley, aided by Moore as a detective, Jack Ryan. Interestingly, Alfred La Rue (later Al "Lash" La Rue) had a small role as a "street urchin" called Migsy.

Stone, La Rue and Moore.

In 1945, Dennis Moore went over to Republic Pictures and topped the cast in THE PURPLE MONSTER STRIKES. However, the serial really belonged to Roy Barcroft, the so-called monster from Mars sent ahead to prepare an invasion of Earth by the Martian army. Moore was Larry Foster, legal counsel for a scientific foundation.



The same year Moore returned to Universal to play federal investigator Grant Farrell in the company's final serial, THE MYSTERIOUS MR. M.

Jim Farrell (William Brooks), under the influence of a drug, attacks his brother (Moore).

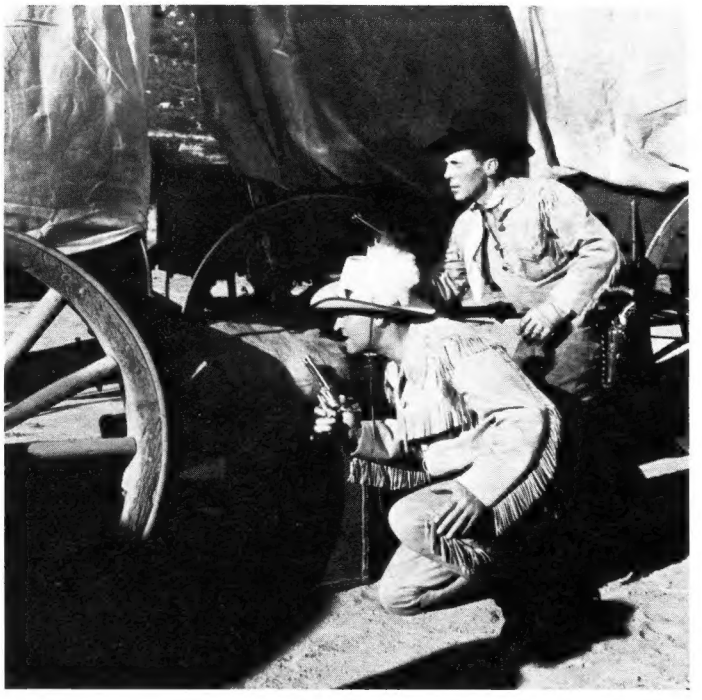
While he was involved in most of the cliffhangers, he received only third billing. The plot concerned finding a noted inventor and information about his new "submarine generator". As it turned out, Mr. M met his demise in a sub.

For the next decade, Moore's screen career was spent playing secondary or bit roles, usually a villain. He could act as well as his peers, but somehow lacked the special personality which attracted a sustained, loyal following.

It is ironic that he should have appeared in Universal's final serial — because history was to repeat itself. Moore acted in Columbia Pictures' last two chapter-plays, both released in 1956.

First, in PERILS OF THE WILDERNESS he was the "star" as Laramie, a deputy marshall. His name was in larger type than the rest of the cast. (Ad below is from an industry "trade" publication.)

Next, he supported Lee Roberts in BLAZING THE OVERLAND TRAIL as Ed Marr, manager of a Pony Express relay station. Much film footage was taken from Buck Jones' serial WHITE EAGLE (1941).



Lee Roberts and Dennis Moore.

Publicity for OVERLAND TRAIL states Moore was a combat flyer during World War II and after the war became a commercial pilot. "But then he married and his wife wanted him to be more 'down to Earth' so he returned to acting." There may be a degree of fact here, but he had a busy film schedule during the war years.

Dennis Moore's face was well known, but somehow many movie fans never knew his name. He died at age 56 on March 1, 1964 — thirty years after he entered movies. For some of us he is sadly missed, but certainly not forgotten.

CHAPTER TITLES

1. The Fatal Hour
2. The Prisoner Vanishes
3. Doom Patrol
4. Dead Man's Trap
5. Murder At Sea
6. Besieged
7. Sea Racketeers
8. Train of Doom
9. Beheaded
10. Flaming Peril
11. Seconds to Live
12. Trial by Fire
13. The Challenge
14. Invisible Terror
15. Retribution

Adapted for TEMI by
BOB MALCOMSON and ERIC HOFFMAN

●

Photo Assistance from
Jim Stringham, Bill Krajcik
and Angel Gutierrez

FOREWORD

With DICK TRACY vs. CRIME, INC. Republic Pictures brought to an end two highly successful "marriages". It was their fourth and last Dick Tracy serial (although later RKO Pictures and a television series utilized the character to poor advantage); and, the final pairing of William Witney and John English as their serial directors (17 consecutive cliffhangers).

* * *

The script for CRIME, INC. (credited to five writers) called for a complete change in the lineup of Tracy's helpers. Mike McGurk and Junior survived only the first two serials (DICK TRACY and DICK TRACY RETURNS), while Gwen and Steve Lockwood remained around for the third (DICK TRACY'S G-MEN). In this, the fourth, Steve was replaced by FBI agent Bill Carr and Gwen's functions were, in a sense, taken over by June Chandler, herself not a member of Tracy's staff, but the daughter of one of the villain's victims.

Tracy was pitted against his most bizarre enemy yet — a mystery criminal called The Ghost, who had the power to make himself invisible. His features were hidden beneath a grotesque rubber head mask, enabling, at one point, Dave Sharpe to double for him in an exciting fight sequence on a hotel rooftop at the climax of episode 13. However, for some unknown reason, no attempt was made to disguise the voice of The Ghost, considering the audience was suppose to guess his identity from five suspects: Morton, Weldon, Brewster, Cabot and Trent.

For those familiar with the voice of actor Ralph Morgan (J. P. Morton), it was no contest to pick him as The Ghost. In fact, audiences who had never encountered Morgan's work were able to arrive at this conclusion as soon as Morgan (or Morton) opened his mouth. Worse yet, Morgan was unconvincingly disguised as a police psychiatrist with hardly any vocal concealment except a slight accent in chapter number two. The question is "why?" after Republic had previously resorted to skillful vocal deceptions (by dubbing the voice of another actor) in four cases: The Lightning (FIGHTING DEVIL DOGS), Don del Oro (ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION), The Scorpion (ADVS. OF CAPTAIN MARVEL) and even THE LONE RANGER.

Aiding The Ghost were two dependable serial faces: Anthony Warde as Corey, the action heavy; and, John Davidson as Lucifer, chief confidant of the master criminal. To the credit of both, they nicely restrained their acting.

An indication of what lay ahead for Republic was its liberal use of stock footage as the basis for several sequences. Episode three contained the train hijacking and Tracy's pursuit by tank from DICK TRACY RETURNS midway, and used the cliffhanger from episodes one and two of DICK TRACY'S G-MEN practically intact for episodes three and four. Miniature work used in S O S COAST GUARD served as the climax of chapter seven. Much action footage was taken from Republic features: "Calling All Marines", "Arson Gang Busters" and "Prison Nurse". For the end of chapter one, an entire sequence (allegedly) from RKO's fantasy "Deluge" (released in 1933), with monstrous tidal waves battering New York's harbor, was used. The spectacular footage had already seen duty in Republic's "S O S Tidal Wave" (coincidently starring Byrd), and would reappear in KING OF THE ROCKET MEN, background for the opening credits of the feature version of ZOMBIES OF THE STRATOSPHERE, and in an episode of the "Commando Cody" TV series.

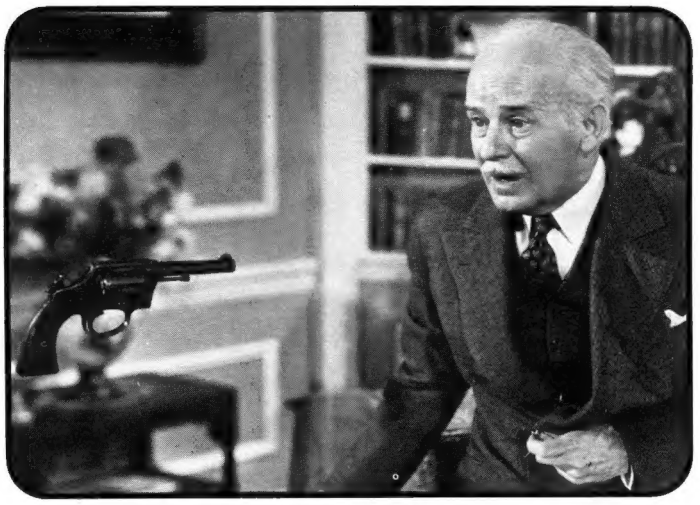
* * *

Nevertheless, DICK TRACY vs. CRIME, INC. had much to recommend it. Special effects by Howard Lydecker were excellent, particularly the car/plane collision at the end of chapter 14 when Corey (Anthony Warde) is put out of commission and Tracy almost meets his doom. The invisibility sequences were exceptionally well handled despite the occasional appearance of a wire or two. Cy Feuer's rousing musical score during the credits was another plus factor.

One of the most effective climaxes — certainly original and breath-catching — was in chapter 15 when The Ghost and Tracy have their final battle. The entire sequence was printed in negative.

THE CAST

Dick Tracy	Ralph Byrd
Bill Carr	Michael Owen
June Chandler	Jan Wiley
Lucifer	John Davidson
J. P. Morton	Ralph Morgan
Lieut. Cosgrove	Kenneth Harlan
Henry Weldon	John Dilson
Stephen Chandler	Howard Hickman
Daniel Brewster	Robert Frazer
Walter Cabot	Robert Fiske
Jim Wilson	Jack Mulhall
Arthur Trent	Hooper Atchley
Corey	Anthony Warde
Trask	Chuck Morrison
Dr. Jonathan Martin	C. Montague Shaw
Policeman	Edmund Cobb
Heavy (in episode No. 7)	David Sharpe
Pilot (in episode No. 1)	John Merton
Nurse	Carol Adams

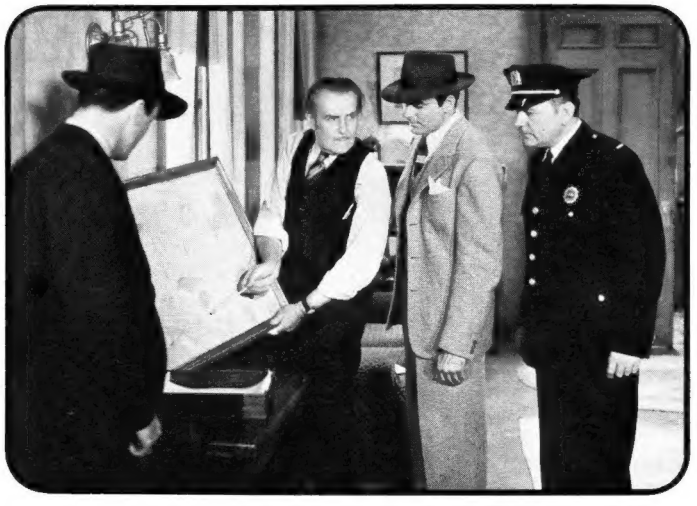


Even with extensive police protection at his estate, noted criminologist Stephen Chandler is killed by an invisible criminal who calls himself The Ghost. Invisibility is possible thru wearing a disc controlled (at a distance) by a machine created by Lucifer. (1)

Fearing for her father's life, June Chandler contacts old friend Dick Tracy for help. Tracy, his assistant Bill Carr, and Lt. Cosgrove arrive on the scene just after the shooting. The Ghost escapes, but Tracy hears a high-frequency whine. (2)

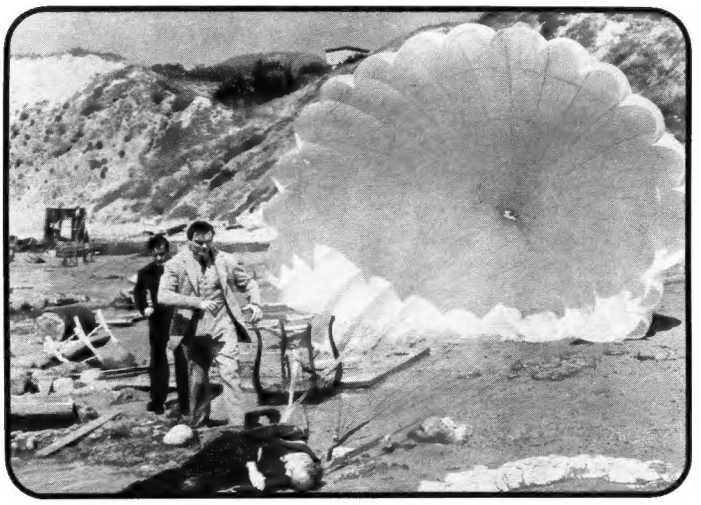
The sound is made by Lucifer's machine when it's operating. Only clue left behind is a thumb print on a card of "Rackets" Reagan, a crime czar electrocuted in Sing Sing thru the efforts of the Secret Council of Eight. Three members are now dead. (3)

At his hideout, The Ghost explains to Lucifer that in his true identity he is a member of the Council and with his brother, Reagan, had planned to form Crime Incorporated. Now ***he*** is Crime, Inc. His newest plan involves noted scientist Jonathon Martin. (4)



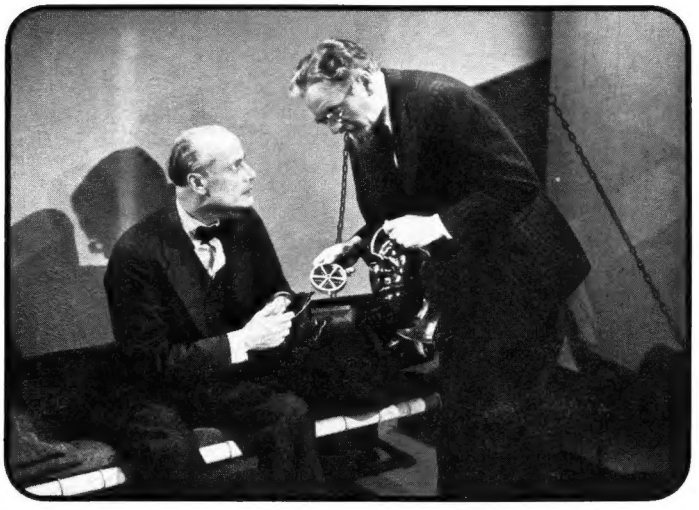
Martin is kidnapped and tortured into revealing his plan how New York can be destroyed. The Ghost demands $100 million dollars or he will demolish the city. Tracy rescues Martin and learns a volcanic fissure in the Atlantic Ocean could be opened up by well-placed depth bombs. (5)

Lucifer and a pilot take off in a bomber with Tracy and Carr, later, in pursuit. But Lucifer has already dropped his bombs and New York's coast is engulfed by tidal waves. Buildings are demolished; ocean liners hurled about. Carr fires on the enemy ship . . . (6)

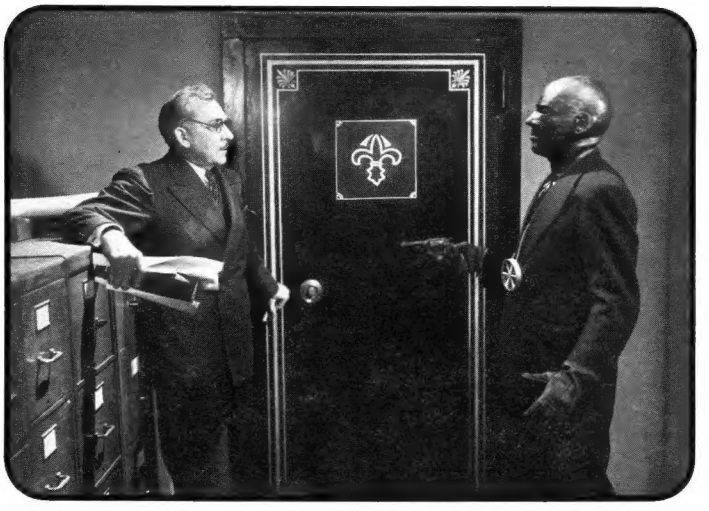


. . . setting the tail afire. Lucifer and the pilot take to their parachutes. Tracy dives at the enemy craft. He and Carr bail out before the mid-air collision. They find Lucifer, unconscious, and take him to jail. (Surprisingly, the tidal waves only damaged the coastal area!) (7)

Later, Tracy informs the Council he intends to have a police psychiatrist, Dr. Metzikoff, examine Lucifer. Disguised as the doctor, The Ghost is able to gain access to Lucifer's cell. (8)



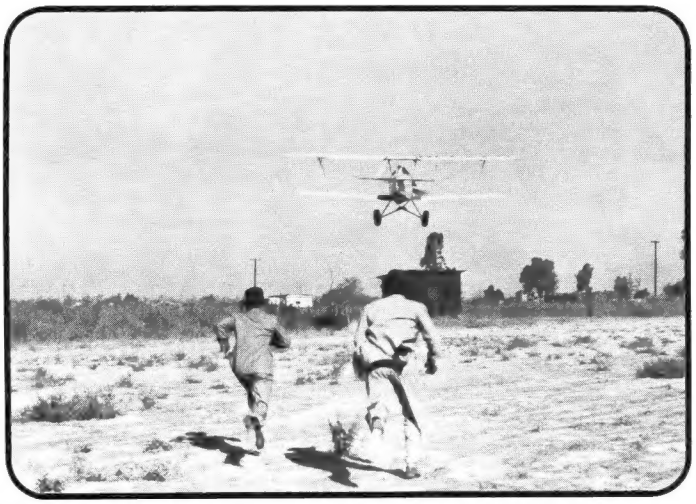
Once inside he gives Lucifer the disc and mask to make himself invisible. He goes to a car outside where Corey operates the invisibility machine. The police, checking the cell, leave the door open and Lucifer escapes. (9)



Trent (in episode four) is the first of the five remaining members of the Secret Council to be killed by The Ghost while seeking the steel magnate's "complete plans for your machinery." (10)

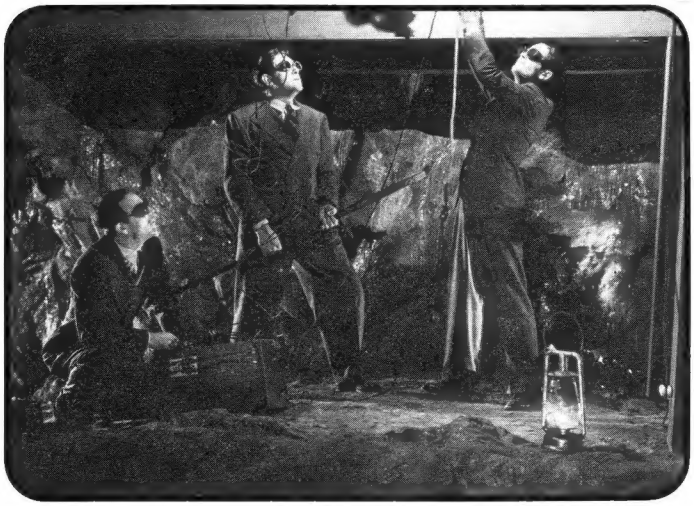
The Ghost is traced to a schooner by Tracy and Wilson, another G-man. He escapes (invisible) in a speedboat while Wilson disposes of a deckhand. Wilson is amazed at the "driverless" boat and pursues it to shore in a rowboat. There he sees The Ghost become visible . . . (11)

. . . and shoots at the strange figure. Lucifer fires from a car, wounding the G-man. Meantime, Tracy has swum to the pier from the schooner and finds Wilson, who starts to mutter: "The Ghost . . . he's in . . ." and goes into a coma. (12)



Wilson, ultimately, is transported by a bogus ambulance that is sent crashing to destruction. The Ghost, meantime, has sent Lucifer and Corey by plane to pick-up Wilson before he "talks". Spotting Tracy and Carr, they lob hand grenades at them — then, when the G-men seek safety in a shack, bomb it! (13)

Tracy and Carr escape thru a trap door. Later, Morton awaits the arrival of a Commander Hawks to bring some papers for Cabot to sign releasing a gold shipment from Customs. Hawks arrives; Morton departs. The Ghost appears, takes the papers, and kills Hawks. Cabot is found unconscious outside by Carr. (14)



Cabot says he can get a new set within 24 hours. Tracy intends to personally guard the gold at the Customs' vault. The Ghost sends henchmen (Note: David Sharpe at right) to use a cutting torch under the vault and get the gold. Tracy and Carr thwart the plan. (15)

Accidently coming across a clue to The Ghost's identity, Cabot sends for Tracy. But The Ghost arrives first, retrieves the damaging evidence (his fingerprint in blood on a badge) and shoots Cabot. (16)

Brewster is shot! Tracy hides him in a private sanitarium. Corey learns of this and, holding the nurse at gunpoint (while Tracy waits in the doctor's office for Brewster to regain consciousness), cold-bloodedly turns off the oxygen — leaving Brewster to suffocate. (17)

The Ghost is chased by Tracy to a powerhouse where the voltage has been turned off. When he tries to escape across high tension wires, the power is turned on. He disintegrates while Tracy and Carr watch. Lucifer's car explodes! Weldon is the only member of the Council to survive. THE END.

COLONEL TIM McCOY / —SERIALLY SPEAKING

by JOHN STOGINSKI
with the assistance of
Nick Williams

Photos Courtesy of
CECIL J. MILLER, NICK WILLIAMS
and JIM STRINGHAM

The venerable patriach of westerns is Colonel Tim McCoy. His tenacious durability is one of America's proud assets.

This enduring aristocrat of the saddle was born Timothy John Fitzgerald McCoy on April 10, 1891 in Saginaw, Michigan. The Indian-sounding name of his birthplace was a happy omen. Fate decreed that Tim become a scholar and exponent of America's Western heritage.

Tim quickly discovered an abiding interest in the "wild and woolly" West. His boyhood was brightened by seeing traveling "Wild West Shows". Tim promised himself he would somehow belong to that fascinating world.

Tim's father had a military background in Ireland. His father, Saginaw's Chief of Police, instilled in his son a dedication to Army life. Plus, a deep attachment to the folklore and history of frontier days. Forearmed with these worthy endeavors, Tim's trail was set.

Completing his elementary and secondary schooling in his home town, Tim was enrolled in St. Ignatius College in Chicago. This midwest metropolis, rich in easy transportation to the hinterlands, did not pass unnoticed by our intrepid hero.

Tim invested in a railroad ticket to Wyoming. Fortune smiled on him as he easily acquired a ranch-hand's job. Indian tribes proliferated in the area. The Arapahoes and Shoshones took a liking to this personable "white-eyes". They kindly taught him their sign language. For a young man, this courtesy and friendly intermingling with an outsider multiplied Tim's respect and admiration for the vanishing Americans (as Indians were poetically designated).

World War I interrupted this idyllic tranquility. Tim earned a commission as a Captain. He served in the field artillery and cavalry. Progress decreed that only three cavalry divisions remain. There were those, wrongly, who did not believe the best thing for the inside of a man was the outside of a horse. It marked the beginning of the end of an equine era.

Fortunately Tim met a dedicated military historian, General Hugh Scott. The latter officer's expert skill in tracing the truth in "Custer's Last Stand" intrigued Tim. Together the two uncovered long hidden details on the battle. Their findings enabled Colonel W. A. Graham to write the definitive book on the battle, "The Custer Myth."

Tim's scholarly pursuits attracted the attention of Hollywood. Famous Players-Lasky, which became Paramount, sought a technical advisor for their monumental epic western, "The Covered Wagon" (1923). They contacted Tim and he gladly accepted.

This was the first large scale western ever filmed. It revolutionized the genre and proved that westerns should not be relegated to low budgets. Tim made himself useful by doing fancy riding and supervising the Indian contingent.

The studio approved of his work so much, that Tim also was selected to do a live stage prologue to showings of the film. After eight months at the famous Grauman's Chinese Theatre (in Hollywood), Tim and his Indian entourage played a year in Europe.

Afterwards, Tim returned home to Wyoming thinking he could not be of further use in filmland. Fortunately for him and audiences, Tim caught the eye of the best and youngest producer of all: the legendary Irving Thalberg. He envisioned a brilliant, classic series drawing upon America's bountiful Western heritage. And he would have all the resources of the gigantic MGM studio behind him.

Before moving to MGM, Tim worked on his two final films for Famous Players-Lasky: "The Thundering Herd" and "The Vanishing American". The stars were, respectively, Jack Holt and Richard Dix with Lois Wilson furnishing the feminine interest. (Writer's Note: Interestingly, the sheet music played at theatres for the latter silent film was "Red Man, Why Are You So Blue?" It never proved popular.)

MGM began Tim's series with "War Paint". It went over big and assured success and Thalberg's faith in Tim. Two of Tim's films were supervised by a man on the threshold of fame, David O. Selznick. He was one of the first, if not the first, to shoot two films simultaneously to save on the budget. They were "Spoilers of the West" and "Wyoming". The first had Chief John Big Tree in it. He achieved everlasting fame not for the film, but because his profile appears on the Indian head nickel.

After two years (1927-29) and 16 films, including two with Joan Crawford, Tim's series ended. Talkies arrived and studios worried that outdoor scenes would be difficult and expensive to produce.

Moving over to Fox Studios, Tim did what amounted to a "test" by doing a one reel (10 minutes) short subject, "A Night on the Range". Tim not only talked well, but he ***sang***.

Realizing he was not a singer, he did something new for him — a serial. Universal cast him in a wonderfully explicit title: THE INDIANS ARE COMING. Allene Ray, Pathe's serial queen, co-starred. Sadly, her voice did not record too well on the admittedly primitive sound recording equipment. Perhaps a few years wait, until the improvement of sound techniques, could have salvaged her career. Tim had no difficulty with voice projection or making the hero believable.

Edmund Cobb was cast as Tim's sidekick. Mr. Cobb has a long career in silents and talkies. He had one serious flaw, though, for an actor: he never changed the expression on his face. Perhaps a half-smile on occasion.

With an actress who could not talk well and a sidekick who did not act, Tim came across as the greatest actor in serials.

* * *

THE INDIANS ARE COMING was the brainchild of Henry MacRae. He convinced the head of Universal, Carl Laemmle, that problems of sound recording outdoors could be successfully and economically overcome. Laemmle was always open to innovative ideas. Fortunately for serial fans, THE INDIANS ARE COMING achieved tremendous artistic and financial success nationwide. (Editor's Note: See TEMI, page 3. The serial opened at the 5,886 seat Roxy Theatre in New York City, "the cathedral of the motion picture", before the building of Radio City Music Hall.)

Plot of the serial was not particularly original. It was suggested by the story "The Great West That Was" by William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody (with continuity from George H. Plympton and Ford Beebe), directed by MacRae and released in 1930.

The cast included:

Jack Manning	Tim McCoy
Mary Woods	Allene Ray
Bill Williams	Edmund Cobb
Tom Woods	(Dual Role) Francis Ford
George Woods	Francis Ford
Rance Carter	Wilbur McGaugh
Bull McGee	Bud Osborne
Uncle Amos (Aimless)	Charles Royal
"Dynamite" (Dog)	"Pal"

As mentioned above, Francis Ford had a dual role as twins. His real-life brother, the late, esteemed director, John Ford, started as a stuntman in his brother's silent serials. Francis Ford starred in many silent serials, often with Grace Cunard. Maturity enabled Francis to become a good character actor. He is best remembered as a beloved sot in several of his brother's westerns. His good-natured portrayals of happy habitual drunkards were comic highlights savored by film followers.

In the serial, George Woods forwarded a letter via Jack to his frontier twin, and niece, Mary. He has struck gold and asks they join a wagon train to the West so they can join him and share his fortune. This device enabled Jack to meet Mary. Jack capitalized on this happenstance and provided romantic encounters plotwise.

McGaugh (as Rance Carter) has two goals: marriage to Mary and gold. His voice, as Miss Rae's, left much to be desired. His sound films were few and far between — thus "talkies" ruined many careers.

Bud Osborne had the right harsh voice to complement his "villainous" career. He prosperously survived. An enormous asset for him whenever bit roles grew short was an ability to drive stagecoaches, buckboards, and horse-drawn conveyances of any kind. His services were not only sought for "B" westerns, serials, but "A" westerns as well. He could handle two, four, six-team horses with fluid ease. As Bull McGee he was what is called the "action heavy". At one point he has a dagger duel with Jack Manning. (Editor's Note: A synopsis of the serial furnished by Universal to the Library of Congress would leave you to believe Bill Williams (Jack's sidekick) is killed by Indians. Not fact. He is very much alive at the fadeout.)

CHAPTER TITLES

1. Pals in Buckskin
2. A Call to Arms
3. A Furnace of Fear
4. The Red Terror
5. The Circle of Death
6. Hate's Harvest
7. Hostages of Fear
8. The Dagger Duel
9. The Blast of Death
10. Redskin's Vengeance
11. Frontiers Aflame
12. The Trail's End

Edmund Cobb, Francis Ford and Tim McCoy.

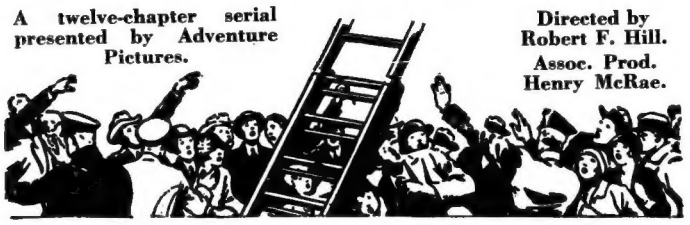
HEROES of the FLAMES

with **TIM McCOY**

Marianne Shockley, Bobby Nelson, Grace Cunard

A twelve-chapter serial presented by Adventure Pictures.

Directed by Robert F. Hill.
Assoc. Prod. Henry McRae.



In June, 1931, Universal released Tim's second and, as events proved, last serial: HEROES OF THE FLAMES. Henry MacRae was credited as Associate Producer as well as writing the story. Ella O'Neill did the dialogue with continuity by George Morgan, Basil Dickey and George Plympton.

The cast included:

Bob Darrow	Tim McCoy
June Madison	Marion Shockley
Jackie Madison	Bobby Nelson
John Madison	William Gould
Mrs. Madison	Grace Cunard
Dan Mitchell	Gayne Whitman
Henchman	Edmund Cobb
Henchman	Andy Devine
Henchman	Bud Osborne
Henchman	Joe Bonomo
Trixie	Beulah Hutton

[Editor's Note: For reasons unknown, Universal was notorious for misspelling names in early advertising. All photo captions and publicity in the pressbook show June, correctly, played by Marion Shockley. Not so in the ads. The same is true of Henry MacRae. Interestingly, Gayne Whitman's voice was dubbed for THE MASKED MARVEL (Republic, 1943) whenever unbilled Tom Steele wore the mask and "spoke".]

CHAPTER TITLES

1. The Red Peril
2. Flaming Hate
3. The Fire Trap
4. Death's Chariot
5. The Avalanche
6. The Jaws of Death
7. Forests of Fire
8. Blank Cartridges
9. The House of Horror
10. The Depths of Doom
11. A Flaming Death
12. The Last Alarm

(Editor's Note: Titles are taken from the pressbook; however, "Catalog of Copyright Entries" shows chapter 9 as "The House of Terror".)

The entire plot centered around one device: an original, brilliant chemical fire extinguisher invented by Bob Darrow on his own time off from his official duties as a fireman. Dan Mitchell has covetous eyes upon it as well as June.

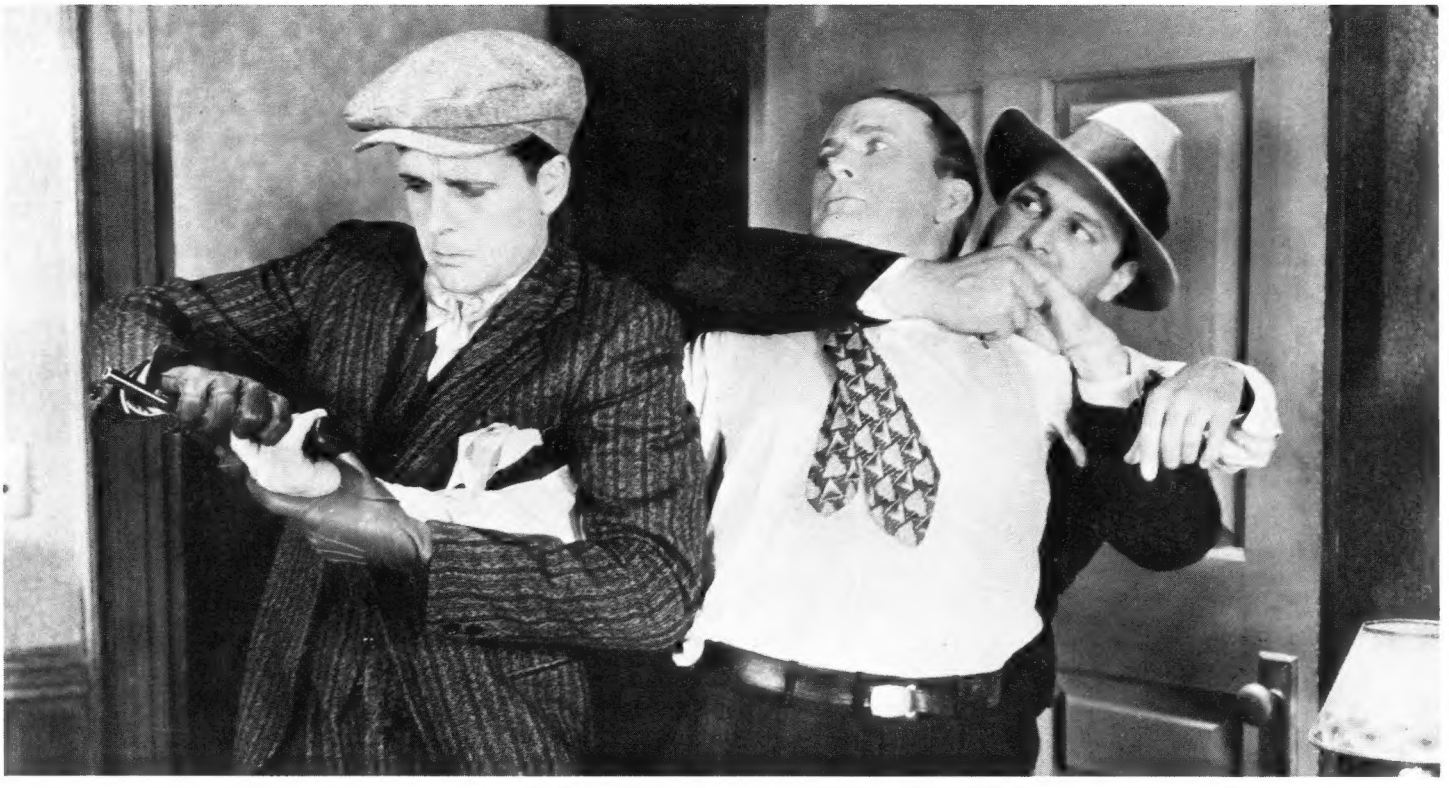
McCoy's immaculate grooming, quiet aloofness contradicted the usual image of the rough and ready range rider. In roles such as this, Tim performed to perfection.

Edmund Cobb returned with Tim, but this sidekick emeritus defected to the enemy. He found his niche in films. His lack of emotion and concern did not befit heroic types, but did conform to the filmic image of "heavies". Mr. Cobb has sadlooking eyes and appeared as he had suffered. He enjoyed a long screen career, principally as a villain. (Writer's Note: Mr. Cobb was born in 1892 and is still living. He resides in California.)

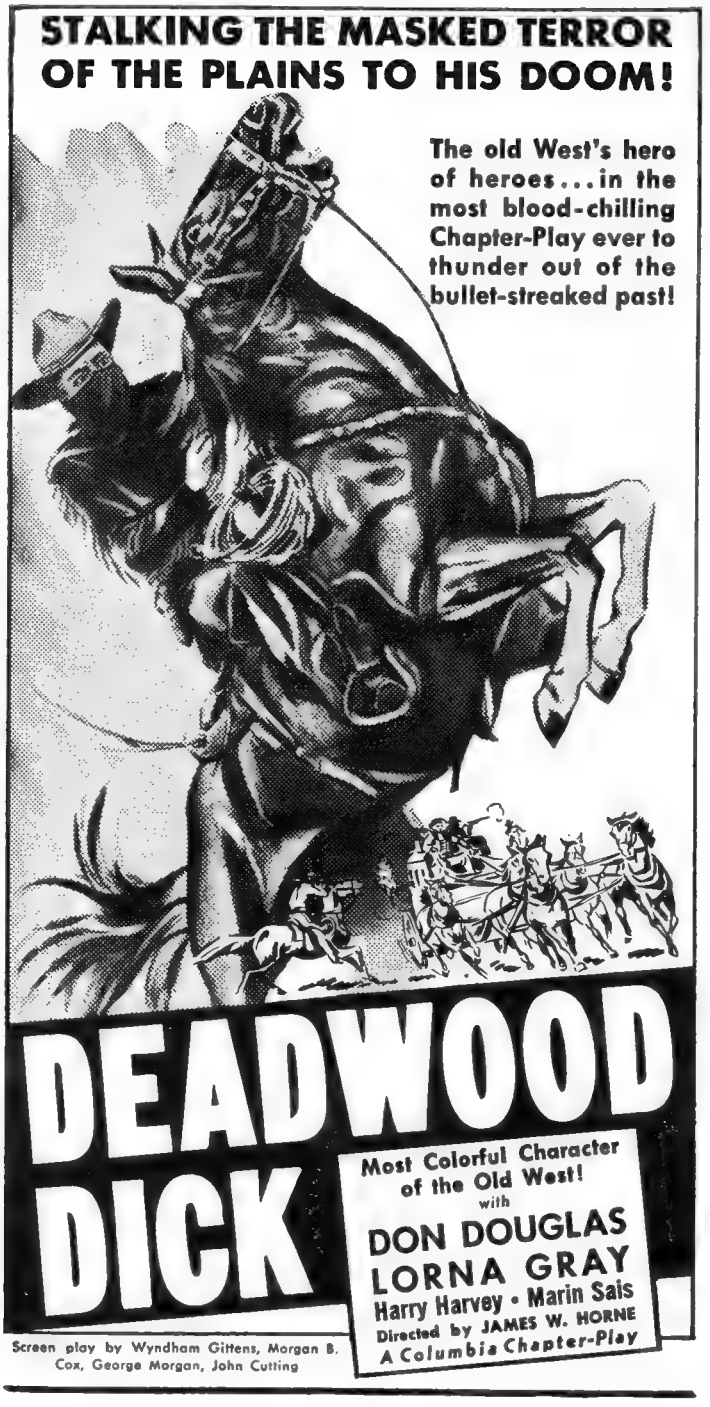
HEROES OF THE FLAMES was not an expensive serial to produce. Liberal use of newsreel footage and even silent features with necessary sound effects added came off to excellent advantage.

McCoy vetoed the idea of a third serial. They were difficult to make and were not known as stepping-stones to stardom in big budget features. Tim feared he was on a serial treadmill to oblivion. As much as serials are fondly recalled by many fans, the major studios' caste system of typecasting actors tended to look down on all personnel employed in serials. Very few serial performers graduated to feature stardom. John Wayne, and to a lesser extent Rod Cameron, became feature stars. Johnny Mack Brown did films with Garbo and Gable, but after leaving MGM and doing serials for Mascot and Universal, he could not return to big films. The same held true for Tim McCoy when he departed MGM. He, too, never again did a big film.

Fortunately Colonel Tim McCoy is financially secure . . . and is still in demand for lucrative personal appearances.



Edmund Cobb, Tim McCoy and Unidentified Actor.



Story and Pictures / Jim Stringham

●

THE CAST

Dick Stanley ..... Don Douglas
Anne Butler ..... Lorna Gray
Dave ..... Harry Harvey
Calamity Jane ..... Marin Sais
Will Bill Hickok ..... Lane Chandler
Buzz Rickert ..... Jack Ingram
Tex ..... Charles King
Drew ..... Ed Cassidy
Ashton ..... Robert Fiske
Bentley ..... Lee Shumway
Jim Bridger ..... Edmund Cobb
and Ed Peil, Sr., Edward Hearn, Karl Hackett, Roy Barcroft, Bud Osborne, Joe Girard, Tom London, Kenneth Duncan, Yakima Canutt.

CHAPTER TITLES

1. A Wild West Empire
2. Who is The Skull?
3. Pirates of the Plains
4. The Skull Baits a Trap
5. Win, Lose, or Draw
6. Buried Alive
7. The Chariot of Doom
8. The Secret of Number Ten
9. The Fatal Warning
10. Framed for Murder
11. The Bucket of Death
12. A Race Against Time
13. The Arsenal of Revolt
14. Holding the Fort
15. The Deadwood Express

Wild Bill Hickok was gunned down by Jack McCall in the No. 10 Saloon of Deadwood on August 2nd, 1876. He held no official position at the time, but had been offered an appointment as City Marshal. Underworld figures of Deadwood were alarmed at the prospect, and McCall, for two hundred dollars did the deed.

The serial established civilization reaching out to the Territory of Dakota as the railroad neared Deadwood and statehood seemed imminent. Dick Stanley, publisher of the Dakota Pioneer Press, sees a new organization of the territory's outlaw gangs, seemingly in opposition to statehood. Reporter Frank Butler learns that a grotesque master criminal known as The Skull seeks to create an outlaw empire and gain control of the mineral rich land. Butler is murdered, and Hickok, called in by Anne Butler, is murdered by McCall. Stanley adopts the disguise of Deadwood Dick to battle the outlaw forces, while remaining an eager, but cautious, supporter of statehood, especially after it becomes apparent that some member of the Statehood for Dakota Club must be The Skull. (Editor's Note: Columbia's pressbook calls it Statehood for Dakota "Committee".)

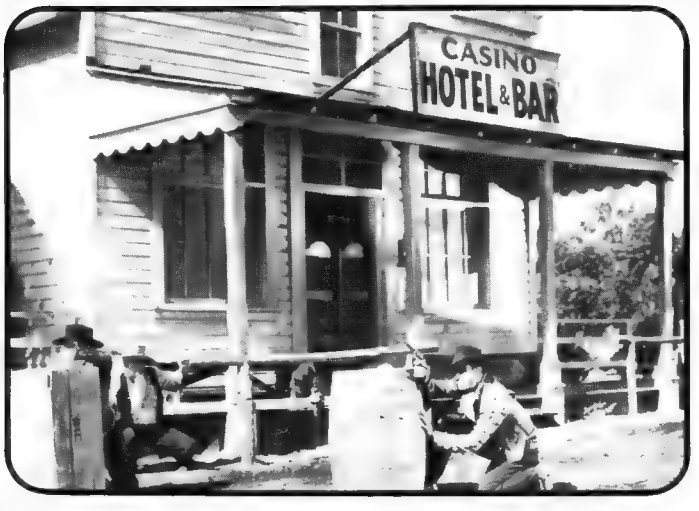
The Skull mounts a series of attacks on the railroad, and several individual members of the club. Responding, Deadwood Dick faces perils including a coach crash, a burning Skull hideout, a dynamited mine, and the detonation of The Skull's arsenal under the No. 10 Saloon. Later, The Skull attacks Deadwood itself by stealing a herd of cattle intended for the railroad construction crew and stampeding them into the town. Skull henchmen attempt to void the railroad's claim along the right of way. Dick exposes the plot, and captures Sears, one of the club. The Skull is smuggling in new rifles for his outlaw army. Dick fails to prevent their arrival by train, but locates them in a Skull hideout and tries to hold off the outlaws until a posse arrives. The Skull sends a blazing wagon crashing into the buildings! Dick breaks out before the shack explodes, and the posse drives off the gang. Dick arms the Deadwood citizens to protect the first arriving train. Skull men fire their warehouse, then shoot at the defenders from cover. Dick fires dynamite at them with arrows, decimating the gang. A captured heavy tells him The Skull intends to cave in the Gopher Mine beneath the train. He races there to drive off The Skull after Buzz Rickert is killed in the fight. He pursues The Skull to his blacksmith shop hideout, then through a secret tunnel to the bank. The Skull is Drew, the banker, suspected by Dick since he brought a crooked marshal into town. Taunted by Drew, Dick tosses his guns aside and thrashes him in a bare hands fight.

Dick Stanley welcomes Wild Bill Hickok to Deadwood. The latter is innocently lured into a trap by Anne Butler and killed in episode number one. (1)

Deadwood Dick outside The Pioneer Press office. When not carrying on his undercover activities, he (as Stanley) is editor of the newspaper. (2)

At the climax of chapter two, a stagecoach with Anne, McCall and Dick aboard plunges into a canyon. Dick jumps free; Anne is knocked unconscious. Skull henchmen (Ken Duncan and Charles King) examine wreckage. (3)

Publicity pose with Dick (Don Douglas) in his "Deadwood" costume and mask, about his neck, and Anne (Lorna Gray). (4)



Gunfight outside the number 10 saloon (note "10" on swinging door). Under the building is The Skull's powder room, blown up at the climax of episode eight with Dick tied-up inside. (5)

WRITER'S NOTES

James W. Horne used the fast pace common to his serials. Characters shouted their lines at lightning speed, and seemed always to be running about. The humor was not so noticeable in the western setting; however, where the gang galloping up on horseback was far more effective than their pouring out of an overloaded car. Other elements remained absurd. The Skull's headquarters was a blacksmith shop. The gang repeatedly raced up, dismounted, and ran inside. The smith pulled a line to open a "door" of baled hay. They rushed through, and he shut the door to continue his work, alone in the little shop. Then, there was Dick's arrival at any new scene: He would gallop up, leap from his horse, draw his guns, look to one side and then the other, then run inside. Always. There was some spectacular action as well, much of it used later in RIDING WITH BUFFALO BILL (1954).

In conclusion: Probably the most ridiculous line of dialogue, delivered with straight face by Don Douglas, was: "This is a job for Deadwood Dick!"

[Editor's Note: While Edward Cassidy was revealed as The Skull at the climax, when he wore the disguise and "spoke" another actor's voice was dubbed onto the sound track — that of familiar character actor Forrest Taylor. Photos of both appear in the cover masthead (page 417).]

Written for TEMI by James Stringham
Photo Assistance: Bill Krajcik/Jim Stringham

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Continued from Page 414.
Cast Credits Appear on Page 412.

Jack Foster is knocked from the autogyro an instant before the crash. The "Package" seized by the Shadow men falls to a dark area where Slade shortly recovers it. Raymond, unaware of the events on the roof, corners Strang, who almost magically disappears. Jerome is accused of murdering Sparks — who immediately appears, alive, but unable to identify his assailant. "If he had been where I could see him when he hit me, I wouldn't have got hit!" And who could argue with that?

The package is empty. Both Slade and Foster seek the contents at The House of Mystery, where Shadow henchmen attack them. Jack follows Vera into a secret chamber. As the panel closes behind them, a bullet activates one of Strang's death traps. The walls close in on them!

Raymond unmasks "the cleverest scheme ever devised by a thief to hide his loot . . . the most priceless collection of jewels in the world; the imperial jewels of the Czar." He establishes that Jerome could have recovered them after attacking Sparks — and the serial becomes a treasure hunt as Jack Foster is menaced by . . .

. . . driving his speeding car off a cliff to avoid the unconscious body of Vera thrown to the road before him!

. . . a death disc, recovered from Jerome's office, which the Shadow detonates with his radio ray!

. . . an explosion, set off by Shadow men as Jack and Vera smash through their barricades!

. . . Shadow heavies, who knock him through an upper story window!

. . . another murder at police headquarters. Strang battles Slade, who sends him crashing into his control unit — and the Shadow's death ray fires! Vera, Jack and all others in the room are blasted from sight!

. . . a battle with Shadow men which sends him falling, shot, from an Empire Transport and Storage Company truck. Slade joins Young, one of the gang, to double cross Strang, whom they believe to be The Whispering Shadow. They capture Strang, who, escaping, hurls Foster into a gas-

filled room! Shadow men storm into a room where Young holds Vera hostage, their shots sounding over her scream! The Shadow finally appears in person in Chapter 11, and hurls Vera into Steinbeck's electrical apparatus, then struggles with Jack at the fadeout.

●

Chapter Twelve and Afterthoughts

The identity of The Whispering Shadow has been revealed so many times there is no reason to deny Karl Dane as "Sparks" — The Shadow — credit. And he was an excellent, logical villain. From the first chapter, he was always present when any of the "official" suspects gained some bit of

Robert Warwick (L), Tom London (Seated) and Hale Hamilton (R).

information which The Shadow would pass on to his men. He was there — but just part of the background. His cheerful naivete placed him below suspicion, helped by an attack on him, apparently by The Shadow, in chapter one.

But who could accept that wire puzzle as a piece of equipment which, attached to a radio transmitter, was: "Yes, a harmless looking toy — which you saw transform a broadcast wave into a death ray!"

The final episode was one of the poorest ever done. The Shadow escaped, but the gang was captured by Raymond and his men. Jack had the key to the deposit box containing the jewels, and so Strang, Steinbeck, and Jerome each revealed his true identity and the reason he sought the treasure. Sparks wandered in (to the radio room) and warmed up his equipment. Jack idly put his hands in his pockets — and reacted, as things suddenly fell into place! He leaped forward to seize the radio man!

Foster had found a death disc in his own pocket, and saw Sparks about to operate the radio transmitter. The connection was obvious, but, with the chapter still short, Jack told, in flashback, of events which caused him to suspect the radio operator, concluding with: "When Miss Strang told me that, I felt sure that it was Sparks that had planted the death disc in Mr. Jerome's office." Since she had, in fact, told him in episode six, his failure to act upon the information extended the serial for six chapters and made him indirectly responsible for the several murders committed in the meantime!

Some action — any action — was needed to end the story, so Sparks, asked how he was able to project the image and voice, said: "Well, I might as well show you. Give me that cape and hat." He donned them —

(L. to R.) Steinbeck, Vera, Detective, Strang, Jerome, Bud and Raymond.

and produced a pair of automatics from the cape! His next words could not have been better chosen: "You fools!" The serial ended, mercifully, shortly thereafter when Jack went out a window, beat him to the elevator, and killed him in a struggle for the guns.

The first chapter was excellent, and most of the early ones very good. The last few, though, seemed to be divided between long conversations and economy recap sequences, by poor continuity, including characters whose names somehow changed between episodes.

Lugosi gave Adam Strang the menace expected of him, though if all of his scenes were taken out of context and spliced end to end his "footage" was amazingly brief. Henry B. Walthall made Bradley a strong suspect, with suspicion returning to Strang after his death. The other players seemed pretty much lost in their roles, and the illogical conduct required of them.

Two characters remained exciting and enjoyable throughout the serial. First, The Whispering Shadow. Not Dane, but the beautifully done image and voice. Then criminologist Robert Raymond. Robert Warwick made him one of the few serial detectives worthy of the title. Exposing the secret of the Shadow's death disc, uncovering "the cleverest scheme ever devised by a thief to hide his loot," unraveling the web of international intrigue which motivated the various parties, his easy competence and confidence made him obviously a match for: The Whispering Shadow.

AN INDEX TO TEMI

. . . covering Chapters 1 thru 26 (400 pages of contents) is currently available. It is all-inclusive, and divided into two sections: (1) Serial Titles and page references (including all titles of the 231 sound chapter plays released from 1929 thru 1956, even though some have not, as yet, been mentioned in TEMI, along with serial production numbers to assist collectors in identifying photos that merely are coded (production No.) but lack a title designation; (2) Every artist (be it actor, actress, director, stuntman, animal, etc.) mentioned in the magazine is included with page number reference.

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A BIT OF WITTICISM . . .

Bill Elliott (Bill), Slim Summerville (Missouri), Roy Barcroft (Luke) and Robert Fiske.

Came across a couple of "comments" in the script for THE VALLEY OF VANISHING MEN, the 1942 serial with Bill Elliott. The gal from the secretarial pool, who typed up the script, must have had a sense of humor.

In chapter 15, here's how one sequence appears in the script:

1904 INT. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER NO. 2 - DAY MED. CLOSE SHOT
On the huge idol as it falls into the CAMERA and through the frame. Kincaid's despairing scream comes over scene. (You see, kiddies, Crime Does Not Pay!).

*

Then, at the very end of the script, this little note appears:

1913 INT. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER NO. 2 - DAY CLOSE SHOT - ON MISSOURI AND SENTRY NEAR DOOR TO NO. 1
Missouri, very pleased, grins at o.s. Bill and Consuelo, then he glances at the sentry. He takes out his dice and shakes them in his hand, then winks broadly and nods toward the open door to Chamber No. 1. The sentry grins and comes to Missouri. They place their arms around each other's shoulders and grin as they walk away from CAMERA, and through door.

FADE OUT
END OF SERIAL
OH, HAPPY DAY!

Don Daynard
Unionville, Ontario

TEMI /

OWNER, EDITOR & PUBLISHER • ROBERT M. MALCOMSON

ASST. TO THE EDITOR and DIRECTOR-ILLUSTRATIONS • JAMES A. STRINGHAM

THOSE ENDURING SERIAL FANS

Letters from TEMI fans are most welcome. However, the information supplied in these columns by readers is based on their opinions. The editor does not necessarily purport the info to be complete, exact or accurate.

ERRATUM AND ADDENDA

Concerning that great THE PHANTOM EMPIRE still on pg. 404. (B) is not Burns, but the late Charles K. French. His grandson is Victor French, who's today making a name for himself in films and TV. (G) is, of course, Wheeler Oakman. You probably got the Warner from Warner Richmond, who played one of Oakman's henchmen. (a) IS Jay Wilsey (a/k/a Buffalo Bill, Jr.) and (b) IS Wally West.

William Lazear
Ashland, Kentucky

[Editor's Note: Confirmed: (c) is Barney Sarecky and (d) B. Reeves Eason. Unidentified man standing next to (A) Betsy King Ross is Armand Schaefer, production supervisor. Later he co-directed with Eason THE MIRACLE RIDER (pg. 50) with Tom Mix.]

Concerning FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE (pg. 406), actor Donald Curtis plays the role of "Captain Ronal". His name is omitted on the screen. He has a good supporting role and plays through the entire 12 episodes.

On page 414, George Magrill was the first actor left to right. Jack Perrin was the second. Magrill's name was omitted from photo caption.

Edward R. Billings
Nashua, N.H.

[Editor's Note: On page 413, actor on car running board is Max Wagner. In front seat is Perrin.]

* * *

Regarding FLASH GORDON (pgs. 406-7), Ray Mala was the Rock Prince (not the King, who was Chief Yowlachie); Clarice Sherry was Queen of Friga. Actors with Sonja and Torch are Reed Howes, Roy Barcroft and Lane Chandler.

On page 424, names of missing actors in the Shadow's instruction room are l. to r. George Magrill and Lionel Backus.

To my discovery, George Letz (one of the five "rangers" in THE LONE RANGER) under his new name of George Montgomery is credited as ***Set Director*** on THE VIGILANTE (Columbia, 1947).

William John Ryan
Bronx, N.Y.

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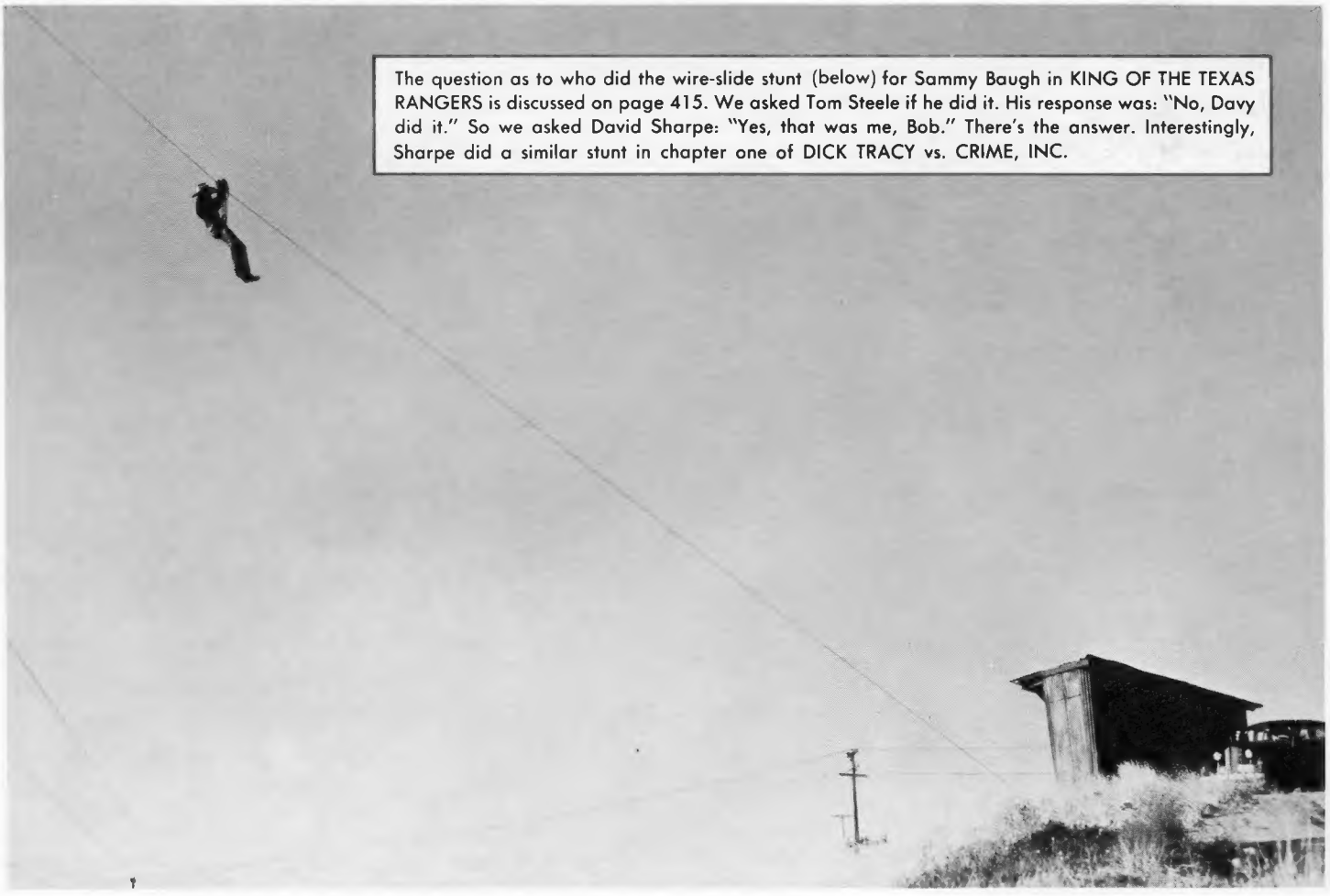
Jerry Mezerow
Placentia, Calif.



The question as to who did the wire-slide stunt (below) for Sammy Baugh in KING OF THE TEXAS RANGERS is discussed on page 415. We asked Tom Steele if he did it. His response was: "No, Davy did it." So we asked David Sharpe: "Yes, that was me, Bob." There's the answer. Interestingly, Sharpe did a similar stunt in chapter one of DICK TRACY vs. CRIME, INC.

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